

Meeting Summary
U.S. Route 34 Gulfport to Monmouth
Second NEPA/404 Merger Meeting
September 25, 1998

The purpose of the second NEPA/404 merger meeting was to gain concurrence for the alternates recommended to be carried forward as final alternates for the U.S. Route 34 Gulfport to Monmouth study. In addition, toward the end of the meeting, the merits of keeping this project in the NEPA/404 merger process were discussed.

The merger meeting attendees included:

Paula Green	IDOT	John Betker	USACE
Dave Clark	IDOT	Mike Bruns	IDOT
Steve Hamer	IDNR	Sherry Kamke	USEPA
John Anderson	IDOT	Pete Frantz	IDOT
Paul Niedernhofer	IDOT	Tom Lacy	IDOT
Dennis Johnson	FHWA	Ken Park	IDOT
Keith Hoernschemeyer	FHWA	Gary Baker	QST
Barb Traeger	IDOT	Lee Austin	QST
Rich Nowack	IDOT	Kris Erickson	QST
Kathy Ames	IDOT		

A brief presentation was made outlining the consensus points that had taken place and been concurred with prior to this meeting. Those items included: the roadway from Carman Road to U. S. Route 67 will be a four-lane expressway; the southeast bypass of Monmouth has been eliminated from further consideration for this project; the environmental process for this project will continue as an EIS process; and the process of evaluation and recommendations for elimination of many preliminary alternatives.

The environmental constraints of the project area were briefly reviewed. It was noted that wetland impacts for each of the recommended remaining alternates ranged from just under 1 acre to just under 2 acres.

It was noted that in the Monmouth area, studies are ongoing to determine the type of facility that will ultimately be constructed on the existing alignment. The alternatives include upgrading the existing expressway, converting the existing to a freeway, or possibly upgrading of the expressway and including an interchange in the Main Street area. No recommendation was made at this time and, therefore, no request for concurrence on these options.

Mr. Gary Baker then explained the process that was undertaken to eliminate or retain alignments and the tabulation of impacts associated with each of the alternates studied. The labeling scheme for the study sections was also explained. Currently, there are three sections whereas five sections were utilized previously when the number of study alternates was greater. The criteria utilized to evaluate the study alternates (i.e., Table 3-1) were also explained. Relative to the first round of alternate evaluation, the criteria used for the recommendation of the final study alternates were more extensive, including several categories related to agricultural impacts.

Mr. Baker reviewed the evaluation and recommendation for Section I. The recommended alternate in this area is IM2B (Yellow), which has 0.85 acres of potential wetland impacts and four stream crossings

(two perennial, two intermittent). In Section I there are two wetland areas near existing Route 34 along the north side that would be directly impacted by the recommended alternate. Mr. Lee Austin provided additional information on these areas presenting options that could be used to minimize impacts. Further study will be done in this area to study the extent of impacts on the wetlands, in particular the seep area and residences that are on the south side of existing Route 34. It was agreed that the selected alternate was appropriate to be taken into the final evaluation.

Mr. Baker then reviewed the evaluation and recommendations for Section II. The recommended alternates to be carried on as final alternates in this section are 3E4B (Purple) and 3G4B (Yellow). Alternate 3E4B will potentially impact four separate wetland locations totaling 0.89 acres, and include ten stream crossings (one perennial, nine intermittent). Alternate 3G4B will potentially impact one wetland for a total of 0.12 acres and involves six stream crossings (one perennial, five intermittent). Alternate 3G4B is preferred by the study team due to the potential for reduced overall environmental impacts, however, 3E4B will be carried through the evaluation of the final study alternates in order to draw a comparison between farmland impacts and impacts to residences and businesses. 3G4B will also provide the possibility for a future interchange at IL 94/116, which would not be feasible along 3E4B. It was agreed that, as recommended, both alternates were appropriate to be carried forward into the final evaluation phase and presented at the next public meeting.

Section III alternates were review by Mr. Baker. The recommendation for Section III is to retain alternates 5B (Purple) and 5E (Yellow). Each of the alternates within Section III impact the same wetland area, with the exception of Alternate 5E. Alternate 5B would potentially impact one wetland (0.01 acre), and cross six intermittent streams/drainages. Alternate 5E will not impact any wetlands, and will cross 13 intermittent streams/drainages. It was agreed that the recommended alternates were appropriate to be taken into the final selection.

Based upon the results of the evaluation, and consensus on that process, the final study alternates will be carried forward and evaluated from end to end (i.e., terminus to terminus) rather than in sections.

Therefore, the recommended final study alternates will be:

- 1M2B, 3E4B, 5B;
- 1M2B, 3E4B, 5E;
- 1M2B, 3G4B, 5B; and
- 1M2B, 3G4B, 5E.

The following statements were made by agency attendees:

J. Betker, (Corps. of Engineers) - The wetlands evaluation must use the Food Security Act Manual (NRCS) within the agricultural fields. He was concerned that as the mapping does not show any wetlands in these areas, that farmed wetlands may have been missed. Mr. Betker indicated that IDOT, INHS, and/or the consultant has to consult with NRCS in order to certify the presence or absence of farmed wetlands within the vicinity of the final study alternates. The determination procedures within agricultural fields must follow those outlined in the Food Security Act. IDOT and QST attendees did indicate that NRCS wetland mapping had been used early in the data acquisition and constraints mapping process.

J. Betker, (Corps. of Engineers) - With the new rules that may be implemented, it is possible that the project could fall under a nationwide permit category for linear public transportation improvements. This should be kept in mind as the project proceeds.

Steve Hamer from IDNR indicated that the "sand hill prairie" area near Gladstone Road would not be seriously affected if there were some cutting as preliminarily indicated along the north side of U.S. 34 east of Gladstone Road (IL 164). Efforts should be made to minimize the necessary cuts into the hillside.

**U.S. ROUTE 34
GULFPORT TO MONMOUTH
MEETING WITH FARM BUREAU
March 25, 1997**

A meeting was held with members of the Warren-Henderson Farm Bureau on March 25, 1997 to provide an opportunity for the membership to express their views and opinions of the Route 34 Project. (Sign-in sheets are attached). The discussion is summarized herein:

- I. Lorrie Mattes, of the Warren-Henderson Farm Bureau provided an introduction to the meeting.
- II. Kevin Rund, Director of Local Government for the Illinois Farm Bureau presented "When A Highway Comes Your Way." His presentation provided a thorough preparation for the local farming community in the event of a new highway being planned for their area, such as with the improvements to U.S. Route 13. Specific slides in the presentation included:

Major Phases of a Highway Project

- Preliminary Planning
- Public Involvement/Input
- Final Planning
- Land Acquisition
- Design Plans and Bids
- Construction

Highway Construction Vocabulary . . . for example:

- Adverse Travel
- Damage to Remainder
- Eminent Domain
- Quick Take
- Construction Easement

Tips on Self Help

- Drainage referencing the IL Drainage Law ("maintain flow as it has been")
- Access
- Direction of Travel
- Construction Easements
- Public Utility Easements

Kevin's message was to ask questions, and to stay involved throughout all phases of the project development process.

- III. Dale Risinger was then introduced; he provided introductions of the IDOT and ESE project team. Dale complimented Mr. Rund on his presentation stating how well it presents the need for communication from the local property owners. He went on to note that this phase of the project is considered to last a duration of three years.

Furthermore, at this time there is no funding for construction or even for the next phase contract plan preparation.

- IV. Gary Baker, Project Manager for Environmental Science & Engineering, Inc. described the Study Process and where the project is currently within that process.

The primary purpose of this meeting is for the Study Team to listen and to obtain input, from the local farming community. He stressed the early public involvement through a pair of Public Information meetings in September where there had been no preconceived ideas of where the new road/relocation would go or what type of facility it would be. The purpose of the early public meeting is to engage the public early for the express purpose of garnering input of local characteristics and farming operations.

ESE has used the time between public involvement activities to gather local information from a variety of sources and to coordinate with the public agencies which look out for the best interests of the community. They have also studied the areas traffic characteristics, safety/accident issues, and results of the origin-destination survey that was conducted last May.

Gary spoke of the questionnaire that was distributed in the study area last year. More than 150 were returned. A synopsis of public comments: What was considered to be the most important issues related to the U.S. Route 34 project, included traffic and in particular truck traffic and farmland impacts. The most recorded problems perceived along the existing road were safety, truck traffic and congestion. The study team uses this information as one of the elements in their decision-making process.

Mr. Baker went on to describe the recommended study corridor and the additions, deletions and omissions as compared to the corridor approved in 1970. He mentioned a suggestion to expand the corridor to the south to Dutch Row Road as not meeting the needs of the local communities.

The Definition of Freeway/Expressway was briefly described as well as the components of the evaluation of the Freeway versus Expressway options.

The recommendations of these studies are expected to be far enough along for discussion at the Focus Group Meeting which will be held in the next several weeks.

Also an additional public meeting has been planned, not originally scheduled, but determined to be important to return to the public to discuss the ongoing work and project-related events. The project team encourages public input. Therefore, this additional public meeting is being scheduled, and should occur within the next couple of months.

Gary went through the Study Process board to illustrate where the project team currently is in the larger scheme. The result of this process, the location study process, is design approval.

- V. Charlie Barton for IDOT spoke about land acquisition issues: process, survey, appraisals (market approach and income approach), and negotiation.

VI. Questions From the Attendees

When would IDOT begin land acquisition?

Is the existing ROW for US Rt34 being considered for use? (Some discussion occurred with regard to roadway characteristics and expressway vs. freeway issues as they relate to the use of the existing road).

Does present traffic justify a freeway?
Iowa criteria is different from Illinois; IDOT considers freeways when looking at volumes of 8,000 ADT, or greater. However, system linkage is important when considering the decision of the number of lanes for a planned road (2 vs. 4 lanes).

Would IDOT buy property with the purpose of displacing businesses?
ROW acquisition occurs for access control and in areas of interchanges. There are instances of expanded ROW purchases in certain areas because of access issues, not to expressively displace businesses.

IDOT will likely build an interchange at Carmen Rd.
IDOT cannot buy more ROW than is required for the project.

Down in the bottoms - how high will the new road have to be?
Within floodplain, the Department may assume some risk of flooding the road versus the significant additional cost of raising the profile. IDOT will look at the best use of pavement for the citizens of Illinois

Why not a straight line from Burlington to Route 67?
A straight line may not pick up the maximum amount of traffic.

4-laning 61 in IA, will that not impact the usage of this road and therefore affect this project? That is in a different location.

If there is a group in opposition to this project, does IDOT want to hear from them?
We want to hear the concerns whether for or against.

Will cemeteries be moved? IDOT will not move a cemetery for this project!

Is there some criteria for building in the floodplain?
The project team will look at the height of the road in relation to the floodplain and will look at benefits and costs associated with roadway placement and height.

U.S. ROUTE 34 GULFPORT TO MONMOUTH

March 25, 1997

Warren-Henderson Farm Bureau

Please PRINT your name and address so we can add you to the mailing list

NAME

ADDRESS

LARRY S. STERETT	Route 1 - Box 107	Biggsville, IL 61418
Wendal Shawnee	3134 S 34	KIRKWOOD 61447
Janet Cising Lee	Box 9 RFD.	Cladstone, IL 61437
Jane Weir	RR# Box 25	Cladstone, IL 61437
Don Zerkowich	RR 1	Cladstone, IL - 4
Phillip Bugger	P.O. Box 944	Cladstone, IL 61469
Don H. Ford	RR 1 - Box 91	Biggsville 61418
Steve Erlandson	2731 30th Ave	Kirkwood
DONOVAN VANCE	301 N 6th	MONMOUTH
Robert Blackford	400 S Main	Monmouth
Mr. R. Kellberg	Box 205	Stronghurst, IL
Duane Jensen	R. 1 1647-50 st	Kirkwood IL
Margaret Jensen	" " "	" "
Donna Price	RR 1 Box 182	Biggsville, IL
Bill REICHOW	302 SO. 3rd	MONMOUTH, IL
Merlin McClure	280-150 Ave.	Kirkwood, IL
Don - Don - Don - Don - Don	- Stronghurst	
Robert J. Scott		Media
Angie Millner	374 US Hwy 34	Kirkwood, IL
Louise Roos	PO Box 505	Monmouth, IL 61462
Ermy Lee Thomas	Post Oak Avenue	Monmouth, IL 61462
Mya C. Mitchell	Oak Terrace	Monmouth, IL 61462

U.S. ROUTE 34 GULFPORT TO MONMOUTH

March 25, 1997
Warren-Henderson Farm Bureau

Please PRINT your name and address so we can add you to the mailing list

NAME

ADDRESS

Raymond E Defenbaugh RR#1 Box 268 Bigsville IL 61418
Stephen E. Smith RR#1 Box 30 Kirkwood IL 61447
RONALD L. ROLL R.R. 316 150 AV KIRKWOOD IL 61447
David Webb 220 W Franklin Monmouth IL 61462
M^{rs} L. Weibel RR#1 Box 310 Bigsville IL 61418
Tim Phelps 1843 100th St Monmouth
Jim + Kathy Olsen R.R.#1 Box 134 Carman, IL 61425
Vince Whitman 21 Box 104 Bigsville, IL 61418
Matthew O'Denbaugh RR Box 222 Bigsville IL 61418